



US Army Corps
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Huntsville Center

Bulletin

*Mark your
calendar now...*

**Lt. Gen. Robert
L. Van Antwerp**

**Commanding General
and Chief of Engineers,
USACE**

Town Hall

May 12

2 p.m.

Exhibit Hall

UA Huntsville

Buses will be available

**Behind the
Gates of
Redstone
Arsenal**

May 15

10 a.m. — 3 p.m.

Bridge Street

Town Centre

**Old Madison Pike and
Research Park Blvd.
Huntsville, Ala.**

On page ...

**5 Nearly all
installation
projects link
to Campaign
Plan Goal 3**

**8 Center mothers
inspire children**



Photo by Becky Proaps

Children celebrate Earth Day

Children from the local community don protective suits and gloves preparing for a “mock” environmental cleanup on Redstone Arsenal, Ala., during Earth Day events April 22. For the story and more photos, go to page 12.

Army standard for fire stations approved

**By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office**

A standard for another Army facility type has been formally approved and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville's Center of Standardization will ensure standardization objectives set by the Assistant Chief of Staff for Installation

Management (ACSIM) are achieved.

Huntsville Center has added Army fire stations to the fold of 15 facilities supported by developing and maintaining Building Information Models, providing design oversight and construction support to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Districts involved in construction efforts, developing military forms

required for construction projects and establishing contracts.

Other standards developed by Huntsville Center include medical, correctional, sports and fitness, child and family services facilities and training ranges.

Huntsville Center's project manager Alonzo Andrews

See Fire Stations on page 10

Commander's thoughts

Teammates,
I was away from Huntsville Center most of April.

April 7-15 I was on the road in Afghanistan with Bill Sargent, chief of International Operations Division, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate, and Margaret Simmons, chief, Office of Counsel. We spent nine days meeting with our customers and seeing our teammates to learn about the important work we are doing there first hand.

The trip to Afghanistan was very productive. The primary purpose of the trip was to assess our execution of three Huntsville Center projects:

1. U.S. Forces — Afghanistan, Joint Force Engineering Command (JFEC), Mobile Team Demining: This is a \$66 million contract for a two-year effort to clear mines and unexploded ordnance at priority sites. This mission has grown from five sites to 13 sites. Our project manager forward, Keith Angles, and the contractor (EODT) are providing great support to the JFEC, and this project is ahead of schedule.

2. Bagram Air Field Demining: \$12 million contract to clear expansion area for construction. A start date of May

10 has been set for the demining of the Bagram expansion areas. Our PM forward, Jim Walker, is working to ensure the contract (UXB International) deminers and equipment get in country by that date.

3. Task Force Power: \$31 million contract to conduct electrical inspections for life safety. There are approximately 160+ remote sites being inspected. The Huntsville Center PM forward is Brad Smith, and he and the contractor are providing great support.

We also discussed possible future work for Huntsville Center in Afghanistan. The International Operations Division will be recruiting for qualified program managers, project managers and OE safety specialists to deploy to Afghanistan for six months to a year to support our various projects there. Initially the recruitment action will canvass internally, giving our folks an opportunity to deploy to Afghanistan and support Campaign



Col. Nello L. Tortora

Plan Goal 1. The recruit action will then be released externally, ensuring any qualified applicants understand the job is for deployment to Afghanistan. If you are interested, and qualified, talk with your supervisor now so that when the announcement comes out, you'll be ready to apply.

I was back a day or two and then left for Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., and the annual engineer conference ENFORCE. I ended the month off-site for a Management Review event.

April was a critical month for employees and supervisors as they completed mid-year reviews under the National Security Personnel System pay system and put in place important documents for the transition back to the General Schedule (GS) pay system May 23. Probably the most important thing to remember is that no one will lose pay as a result of going back to GS. There are bound to be some challenges in the transition back to GS. If issues come up, supervisors will

See Commander on page 3

Hails and farewells

Welcome to new employees —

Mani Alison, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Learning Center; **George Crittenden**, Center Contracting; **Tracey Edmonds**, Center Contracting; **Timothy Fulmer**, Engineering Directorate; **Travis Hopkins**, ULC; **Lea Jones**, Engineering Directorate; **Wynelle Kirkham**, ULC; **Raven Moore**, ULC; **Angela Morton**, Equal Employment Opportunity Office; **David Shores**, Center Contracting; **Kelly Stell**, Center Contracting; **Thomas Weeks**, Internal Review Office; and **Brandy Wilkerson**, Chemical Demilitarization Directorate.

Farewell to Rosemary Echols, Resource Management; **Kenneth Goddard**, Center Contracting; **Doug Hadley**, Environmental and Munitions Center of Expertise, Omaha, Neb.; **Scott Rider**, Ordnance and Explosives Directorate; **Rose Slaughter**, ULC; and **Connie Tuck**, Engineering Directorate.



US Army Corps of Engineers®

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BULLETIN

Commander..... Col. Nello Tortora
Chief, Public Affairs..... Debra Valine
Editor..... Becky Proaps



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The Bulletin asks:

What do you perceive are the advantages or disadvantages of transitioning from NSPS to GS?

Based on the knowledge I gained from the GS 101 training course I took, the only change that I will encounter through the transitioning is the possibility of my getting a raise will now be based on a yearly format instead of the former 6- month plan under NSPS. My progress will be followed for a longer period of time. This will allow me far greater control of my opportunities to enhance my learning curve, resulting in a far greater chance to maximize my success in achieving the goals set forth in my performance objectives.



Joaquin J. Tucker
Center Contracting



Eric South
Resource Management

I see it as a positive move, since in my opinion the Total Army Performance Evaluation System may possibly be the new evaluation method. I think TAPES, when utilized correctly, is probably a lot more constructive than the pay pool system in NSPS. Parts of TAPES are used to evaluate Soldiers in the Army. If it is good enough for the Soldiers, it's good enough for Civilians.

I think the transition will be advantageous for everyone within Huntsville Center. Personally, I didn't think that NSPS was altogether fair, and I never benefitted much while under NSPS. The GS system is straight forward and easy to track, with less chance for compromise. Everyone is eligible for a pay incentive, if they perform well. The transition itself will go smoothly, since Huntsville Center was recently under the GS system. I'm very optimistic about the change.



Atidya Williams
Business Management
Office

Commander

continued from page 2

work diligently with our civilian personnel team to fix them.

Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp will be here May 12 and conduct a town hall for employees. The town hall is scheduled for 2 – 3 p.m. at the University of Alabama, Huntsville. More information will come out about this as it becomes available.

Also in May, the Huntsville Center will participate in the first “Behind the Gates of Redstone Arsenal” event May 15, from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m. at Bridge Street Town Centre. This event is being coordinated by Leadership Huntsville/Madison County, Bridge Street and local government agencies. The goal is to show the public the types of work government agencies in Huntsville do. Huntsville Center will be

participating with several demonstrations of our capabilities.

May is also Asian Pacific American Heritage Month. The theme for this year is “Diverse Leadership for a Diverse Workforce.” We will partner with Team Redstone for an observance. More information will come out via e-mail.

We're on the back half of the fiscal year now. We've been meeting our monthly contracting goals, but as we get closer to year-end, customers will be looking to us to obligate money for their unplanned projects. Be proactive and be ready for this so the year-end close-out goes as smoothly as possible.

Bottom line is: obligate 100 percent of what we say we will obligate. We want to be able to say at the end of the year that we accomplished everything we said we would accomplish. If we

are not going to meet an obligation, we need to communicate with our customers. Keep everybody informed so that we do not have to deal with a crisis.

June 4 is our annual Engineer Day Awards and picnic. This year it will be conducted at Monte Sano State Park. The Engineer Day awards ceremony will start at 10:30 a.m. This will be your place of duty during this time; the picnic is optional, but you are certainly invited to stay. The Huntsville Center Activities Association is busy planning the picnic, which will follow a similar schedule as past organization days. They could use some help. If you're interested in volunteering, please see Leanne Carter.

As always, I thank you all for your great support to Huntsville Center, our armed services and our nation.

Employee Spotlight: Matt Knox

What is your job title and where do you work?

I am a business systems manager in the Business Management Office. I joined the Corps in January 2009, so I've been here a little over a year.

In your own words, what is your job?

I help facilitate the strategic planning process for the organization, including the annual review, and, if necessary, updating the Huntsville Center Strategic Plan and Implementation Plan. Over the last year the executive team has developed or updated several strategic documents, and all of these various actions are presently being consolidated into a single Strategic Plan to be published by the beginning of fiscal year 2011.

These strategic documents include the Commander's Philosophy and Intent, originally published in the September 2009 issue of the "Huntsville Center Bulletin," our updated FY10 Huntsville Center IPlan and Quality Objectives, and our workload prioritization from last December when the leaders met to determine the type of work that was deemed "most aligned" with our organizational priorities.

Additionally, I am working on a key customer program that will be focused on the directors, or their designees, calling on stakeholders who influence our current and future business development. The important message they'll take to these key customers will be built around our core competencies and primary areas of expertise. Because of personnel changes throughout the Corps, it is now necessary to help others within the Corps understand just what it is we do and the value we can be as a resource center for our Headquarters and for other Corps organizations.

Another element of my work relates to our business development and marketing strategies. Our marketing challenge is getting this message to those customers we don't currently work with and who often don't even know we are here and ready to assist them with their needs. Since Huntsville Center operates without boundaries, we must become more proactive in getting the word out about our capabilities, concurrently making it easier for potential customers to find out about us.

Which of the Campaign Plan goals and objectives apply to you?

In a sense I can say that all of the Campaign Plan Goals



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Matt Knox, right, a business systems manager in the Business Management Office, discusses the management process flow chart with Sandy McAnally, front, and Betty Neff, both with the BMO.

and Objectives apply to me because part of my job is to collect and consolidate all of the IPLAN Champions' monthly updates and submit them for the business meeting brief. More specifically, I have an IPlan action for Objective 1d: "Institutionalize USACE capabilities in interagency policy and doctrine."

How do you see your job making a difference and contributing to the Corps' success?

Planning usually sets the foundation for effective execution. We often hear that efficiency involves doing things right and effectiveness involves doing the right things. My job involves helping to point Huntsville toward the right things.

What do you love about your job?

I love being able to work on things that may have lasting effects on Huntsville Center.

Any special moments/memories about your job you'd like to share?

I can share a general comment based on my coming to Huntsville Center from a government agency outside of the Corps. The complexity and the diversity of the work Huntsville Center does never ceases to amaze me. Prior to arriving here, I had a general impression that the Army Corps of Engineers had something to do with water and dams, and stuff like that. Now, in my job I get to see all we do, and it just blows me away.

Nearly all installation projects link your work to Campaign Plan Goal 3

Second in a series

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

The last issue of the “Huntsville Center Bulletin” included an article about how you can link your work to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Campaign Plan Goal 1.

Although we are making the transition back to the Total Army Performance Evaluation System (TAPES), the command intent that at least one performance objective of every employee be tied to the USACE Campaign Plan or the Huntsville Center Implementation Plan (IPLAN) remains unchanged.

You may recall that Huntsville Center does not have actions directly tied to Goal 2. This issue will focus on Goal 3: Deliver innovative, resilient, sustainable solutions to the armed forces and the nation.

“We will use innovative tools to efficiently and effectively deliver high quality facilities,” said Lt. Gen. Robert L. Van Antwerp, commander, USACE, in the Campaign Plan. “We will improve reliability and resiliency of critical infrastructure and reduce risks related to water resources and other Department of Defense infrastructure.”

When you consider Huntsville Center’s mission and product lines, everyone in the Center is supporting this goal. This article will look at each objective under this goal, the actions in the Huntsville Center IPLAN and provide some “food for thought” to help you understand how your work relates to Goal 3.

Objective 3a is to deliver sustainable infrastructure via consistent and effective military construction and real estate support to customers.

“The Huntsville Center has three

specific actions in the IPLAN, all tied to our Centers of Standardization mission,” said Rick Suever, chief of the Business Management Office. “These actions include the development and maintenance of the Army standards for our assigned facility types, the acquisition of contracts or task order awards to support District project execution, and the use of Building Information Models as a means for achieving an adapt/build project delivery strategy.

“Although you may not be directly involved with any of our facility standards, you very likely support the delivery of sustainable infrastructure to our customers at some point in the project lifecycle that begins with planning and programming and goes through facility construction and the capturing of lessons learned,” Suever said.

Consider the following questions with respect to your role in supporting this objective:

- How do I support Huntsville Center’s Center of Standardization mission?
- How do I support military construction planning and programming, acquisition and design?
- How do I support military construction execution?

Objective 3b focuses on improved resilience and lifecycle investment in critical infrastructure.

“Huntsville Center’s IPLAN actions are directed toward planning for the future in two emerging areas: energy and medical support services,” Suever said. “We are already providing a spectrum of services in these areas, and our actions look to expand the support we provide utilizing pockets of capability across the Corps of Engineers and help us plan for the

future in a disciplined manner.

“Even if you are not involved in either of these two programs, another aspect of this objective is facility operation and maintenance, a major product line that supports a wide variety of programs,” Suever said.

You could ask yourself:

- How do I support our programs that provide for and maintain our customer’s critical infrastructure?
- How do I support the Center’s efforts in energy conservation and medical facilities?

Huntsville Center does not have any

See Goal 3 on page 14



Construction at Pueblo chemical demilitarization facility nearly 50 percent complete

By Debra Valine
Public Affairs Office

PUEBLO, Colo. — A construction project here is one of only two sites where the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville (Ala.) is partnering with others to build chemical agent destruction facilities.

Huntsville Center also is working with the Assembled Chemical Weapons Alternative program office to manage the construction projects in Richmond, Ky. Actual construction management is not a normal mission for the Huntsville Center.

Huntsville's Chemical Demilitarization Program serves as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' program manager for facility design and construction of the complex facilities throughout the continental U.S. The ACWA facilities will use either neutralization followed by biotreatment or the super critical water oxidation post treatment technologies to safely destroy the remaining portion of the nation's stockpile of aging chemical weapons at Pueblo or Richmond.

The Pueblo Chemical Depot has a stockpile of chemical weapons in the U.S. totaling more than 2,600 tons of mustard blister agent. In September 2002 a contract currently valued at \$1.1 billion was awarded to Bechtel National Inc. to design and construct the Pueblo Chemical Agent-



Photo by Debra Valine

Workers scrape and level the floor in a munition service magazine to prepare it for a later cement pour.

Destruction Pilot Plant at the Pueblo Chemical Depot.

"PCAPP construction is now 49 percent complete," said Fawzy Makar, the deputy director for the Chemical Demilitarization Directorate and former resident engineer of the Pueblo project. "The facility was originally slated for construction completion in 2013. However, under a proposed accelerated timeline that is pending Office of the Secretary of Defense approval and contract modification, the facility will be completed and operational by April 2012. Once completed, the facility will have three years — working 24/7 — to complete destruction of the chemical weapons stored at Pueblo."

According to Jim Bongers, chief, Technical

Support/Quality Assurance Branch, Pueblo Resident Office, the contractor is focusing the construction effort on the primary buildings for processing the chemical munitions.

"The enhanced reconfiguration building (where the mustard projectile and mortar rounds are unboxed, fed into the process and have energetics removed) had the exterior walls and roof completed in February," Bongers said. "The current work involves erecting concrete masonry block walls and spraying fireproofing on the structural steel. Piping, lighting, electrical conduit and cable tray, and interior walls are being installed in the agent processing building (where the agent is removed from the munitions; this agent is neutralized in hydrolyzers

and the munitions body is heated to destroy any remaining agent). The architectural finishes and interior electrical work are being done in the control and support building (where the workers have locker rooms, maintenance areas and the control room that will operate the plant). The first systems will be released for systemization later this year."

The process for destroying the Pueblo munitions is a combination of neutralization and biotreatment. The process involves five steps:

- **Removing the energetics.** Robotic equipment removes energetics (explosives) from the weapon. The energetics will be disposed of at a permitted facility off site.
- **Removing the mustard**

See Pueblo on page 14

Resource efficiency program paying off

By William S. Farrow
Public Affairs Office

It's not often that a utility company comes knocking with a rebate check, but that's just what happened April 13 when representatives from a local utility provider hand delivered a check for over-payment of electric bills at Fort Sam Houston, Texas.

The \$2,656,650.08 check was because of the efforts of Fort Sam Houston's energy manager, John Gonzales, and especially the investigative work of resource efficiency manager (REM) Charlie Neuman, Sain Engineering Associates, Inc., who made the overpayment known to the CPS Energy representatives.

According to Neuman, he and Gonzales initially met with a CPS Energy representative May 5, 2009, to explain that CPS had incorrectly billed power usage at Camp Bullis Military Training Reservation for nearly five years.

"After several meetings, phone calls and e-mails, they came up with a check," Neuman said.

The U.S. Department of Energy Federal Energy Management Program sponsors the REM program nationally; the Installation Management Command funds the Army REM program and the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville manages the program for the Army. According to Energy program and project manager Will Irby, Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate, catches like this prove the value of the REM program.

"This was a human error problem and a REM caught the error, made it

known, and the Army got its money back," Irby said. "This is a perfect example of why this program was implemented."

Irby explained that the REM is a contracted staff member hired by an installation to support its energy and resource efficiency program. He said the REM's primary focus is to bring about reductions in the cost of energy, water, natural gas, fuel oil,

occasionally as simple as catching accounting errors.

"Historically, the cost savings to an installation identified by a REM have substantially more than offset the cost of contracting for a REM," Irby explained. "A designated, salary-guaranteed manager is key to the success of the program."

Though the programs are designed to be self-funding, Irby said there are initial start-up funds needed to support the manager until the utility savings realized from program efforts can be returned to pay for the program. For the Army REM program, these funds are picked up the first year by IMCOM and go toward the REM's salary, training, equipment and software, travel and administrative support. However, after that first year, the installation then picks up the bill. But there's a catch; the installation will only continue to pay the REM bill if the REM can show savings equal to or greater than the REM's costs.

Over the last year, Irby said the Army's total investment was more than \$2 million and REMs have proposed energy savings in excess of \$10 million.

Irby said Fort Sam Houston is unique because of the amount of money that was returned, but also many other REMs are finding billing and utility anomalies where the government has either been

overpaying utility companies or underbilling tenants.

"This coupled with energy savings project development makes REMs an important resource for the Army, and champions an agency's commitment to energy and environmental goals. As a result, organizations reduce environmental impacts, save energy, improve energy security and save money," he said.

Other REM program success stories:

Carlisle Barracks, Penn.: REM (part-time employee) found the installation was underbilling a tenant \$100,000 annually.

Presidio/Fort Ord, Calif.: REM identified \$68,000 in utility rebates and developed and executed a lighting project saving more than \$109,000 over the next 15 years. REM submitted plan for solar photovoltaic project with savings of more than \$7 million over 15 years.

U.S. Army Garrison West Point, N.Y.: Reimbursable utility billing anomalies from several utility companies for privatized housing was identified for reimbursement for more than \$1.5 million.

Fort Bragg, N.C.: REM proposed project for heating ventilation and air conditioning repairs, control integration, steam-to-hot water conversion, controls upgrade, integration and retro-commissioning of HVAC systems awarded at the 425,000 square foot Soldier Support Center. Project has an awarded value of \$1.9 million with a projected total project savings of \$6 million over 20 years.

refuse disposal, other utilities, and energy- and water-related operations.

He said since installation energy managers are looking at the big picture for energy consumption, REMs are the members of the public works team who are often pouring over the fine print of installation records and bills, analyzing statistics and spreadsheets and coming up with efficient utility use alternatives, which is

Center mothers inspire their children to go from good to great

Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Moms often have the ability to inspire and motivate those around them — especially their children.

With Mother's Day coming up, four Huntsville Center mothers shared their stories.

Featured are Margaret Simmons, chief, Office of Counsel and Tonju Butler, Pre-award Team B branch chief, Center Contracting and their daughters, Shannon Walls and Jade Greene, both students in Center Contracting; Yazmine Gerousis, management analyst, Resource Management Office and Lequita Byrd-Craig, contract specialist, Center Contracting, and their sons, Michael J. Cook and Andrew Craig-Byrd.

Margaret Simmons said her typical work day begins around 8 a.m. and ends well after 5 p.m. However, in spite of this hectic schedule, she tries to schedule time each day for eating lunch with her daughter, Shannon Walls, whenever she is in town.

Walls started work in Central Contracting at Huntsville Center in December 2009. She attends Calhoun Community College, pursuing a degree in business.



Margaret Simmons, left, with daughter Shannon Walls

Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Walls said working at Huntsville Center has been an eye-opening experience for her. Although she is not motivated toward pursuing a law degree, through watching Simmons at work, she recognizes that she gets her hard work ethic from her mom.

Simmons has made it clear to her daughter that her working at the Center does not mean easy access.

"My daughter understands that I have a job, and that sometimes when she wants to see me, she will have to wait. I'm fortunate that she understands that although she is my child, that at the office, work comes first over our relationship (unless it is an emergency)," Simmons said. "I have to respect the same thing if I go over to visit her for a moment and she's unavailable."

"My mom's best advice to me is I can be anything I want to be. If I work hard and put my heart into it — there is nothing I can't do," Walls said.

While Walls said her mom inspires her toward greatness, Lequita Byrd-Craig, said her son, Andrew Byrd-Craig, is the source of her inspiration — to do community service, she said. It is never too early to teach children the value of community service.

Since October 2009, Byrd-Craig has worked with her 2-1/2-year-old son, Andrew, teaching him the art of pageantry, and the importance of giving back to his community by helping others, through Charity Pageant Productions, LLC, an agency based in Birmingham, Ala., that sponsors pageant competitions.

Byrd-Craig said Charity Pageant Productions, LLC, is different from other pageantry agencies. The contestants don't compete for money or prizes; pageants allow money to be donated to non-profit agencies.

Contestants can combine their community service with something they enjoy.

Her aunt recommended that she enter Andrew in his first pageant competition. She mentioned early on seeing traits in Andrew that she thought would afford him success in pageants, and encouraged Byrd-



Courtesy photo

Lequita Byrd-Craig, right, with son Andrew

Craig to give it a shot.

"The pageants are a great way to teach the importance of volunteer service at all ages. They always have a purpose that is focused on raising funds for a cause," Byrd-Craig said.

"Andrew's first pageant was the Queen and King of Hearts Pageant in Trussville, Ala. We raised money for the American Heart Association."

In October 2009, Byrd-Craig said she decided she needed to do more for charity, and signed up for her first pageant.

Byrd-Craig holds the title Miss Heart of America, Madison County Division. Competing in pageant competitions has helped her to overcome shyness and improve her self esteem. She will represent Madison County in the state finals Nov. 13.

According to Byrd-Craig, in the children's competition, Andrew gets a toy car and a shiny new crown. He gets the toy car with or without a win; but for her, she said the end result is different.



Courtesy photo

Yazmine Gerousis, left, with son Michael Cook

"I can go and collect crowns all day long (I have lots of them). What really matters more to me is helping others," Byrd-Craig said. "I must instill in Andrew the same values while he is young."

While Byrd-Craig stresses the importance of mothers teaching important values to children, Yazmine Gerousis said she found the courage to allow her son Michael Cook to find his own path, and follow it as far as it leads.

Gerousis has worked more than 22 years in government service, and said she enjoys working in the business field, especially her current job as a management analyst. But, as far back as she can remember, Gerousis has always been mesmerized by the work that engineers do.

For Gerousis, the salary an engineer made was higher than careers in the liberal arts field, and secretly envisioned her son Michael growing up and becoming one. However, at an early age, it became clear to her that Cook was more interested in

music.

"I recognized my son's talent and passion for music when he was only 7 years old. Music has always been in our family," Gerousis said. "My son's great-grandparents were musicians. His grandma Flory was a country music singer and guitar player in Eagle Mountain, Ala., in the 70s," Gerousis said. "His dad was a musician. Michael watched him write songs and play the guitar since he was old enough to walk."

Gerousis said when Cook finally asked to learn to play the guitar, there was no one to teach him since she and his father had divorced.

Cook relentlessly asked Gerousis for lessons, determined to learn the instrument.

"I knew I didn't have an ear for music, but I knew he did. I finally told him he didn't need anyone to teach him to play the guitar because he was born with music in his veins."

Cook practiced for hours. At 12 years old, he joined a band and was composing his own songs.

"The first time I saw my son playing in a band, it gave me chills," Gerousis said. "I knew he was good at it, and let him follow his own path."

Cook said he is glad Gerousis allowed him to pursue music, and he still has the first guitar she bought him. But he is not limiting his career goals to music.

"I still have what my mom calls a 'back-up plan.' I am a student at Calhoun Community College, and although I haven't declared a

major, I know my mom is right that a good education is a foundation for success," Cook said. "This advice has prepared me for the future, no matter what career I go into."

Tonju Butler said she has a similar view on steering children toward their career path. However, she said sometimes it is a good practice for a mom to diligently steer a child toward success — even if they can't see the big picture yet.

Butler's daughter, Jade Greene, is a sophomore at Alabama Agricultural and Mechanical University pursuing a degree in biomedical engineering. She wanted her first work experience to be in the business field. Greene watched her mom work in this field for many years, and knew her mom loved her job.

Greene said making the decision to work at Huntsville Center was a great career move for her. She has gained valuable work experience and it has allowed her to develop skills that will afford her an opportunity for federal service or work in the private sector upon graduating college.

"My mom takes her job seriously, and has always mentored me. All of my life, she's stressed how important establishing focused goals and being independent are,"

Greene said.

For Greene, there are no disadvantages to working at Huntsville Center with her mom. She said since she lives in the dormitory, it's always advantageous to have a mentor within reach.

"For me, my mom's best advice to me is never say I can't (do something), and don't every quit (what I start)," Greene said.

Butler said she tries to lead by example. A seasoned contracting professional with 22 years federal service, Butler holds a bachelor's degree in business administration and marketing; and is working on her master's degree.

"I want Jade to find her niche, and work hard at it," Butler said.

The relationship between a mother and child can be described in many ways.

For these four moms, parenting is approached in a different manner. However, they all agree that



Photo by Jo Anita Miley

Tonju Butler, left, with daughter Jade Greene

they have given their child an essential tool for success. Ultimately, their children all agree on one thing about their moms: Mom inspired them to go from "good to great."

Huntsville Center has new Small Business chief

Jo Anita Miley
Public Affairs Office

Rebecca Vucinaj joined the Small Business Office in April in a move from Center Contracting's Pre-Award Branch. She had worked as a contract specialist in the Pre-Award Branch since November 2008.

She brings to the SBO chief position more than 15 years contracting experience with Naval Facilities Engineering Command, and was previously a Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization representative with the Marine Corps and Navy at Camp Lejeune, N.C., and NAVFAC, Marianas on Guam, respectively.

Vucinaj received a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Maryland, and a master's degree in management from Troy State University.

Vucinaj said she is all about goal achievement through communication and partnering large and small businesses with key persons in Center Contracting and the Installation Support and Programs Management Directorate at Huntsville Center.

This is not the first time Vucinaj has been assigned to the Huntsville Center



Rebecca Vucinaj

SBO. According to Vucinaj, it was during a 120-day detail assignment to the SBO in 2009 that she began fostering a good working environment between businesses and Huntsville Center's product delivery teams. Vucinaj set up a central repository site that allows employees to enter data electronically to a DD Form 2579. The DD Form 2579 is a management tool used to screen proposed acquisition to ensure that consideration has been afforded to small and small disadvantaged business concerns, and that they receive an equitable opportunity to participate in the proposed acquisition.

See Vucinaj on page 13

Fire Stations

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said the standardization ensures the Army gets its new facilities built with efficient contract awards, lower and predictable design costs and facility construction is completed in the shortest time period.

However, Andrews said fire stations are different because they are a top priority and ensure overall public safety requirements are met.

"Our overall goal is to meet the installation's fire fighting mission," Andrews said.

"Fire fighting capabilities on Army installations is very important and we recognize that," he said. "Our job at Huntsville Center is to ensure the process is streamlined and these facilities are built in accordance with a set standard approved by the Army."

Andrews said Huntsville

Center's commitment to this crucial facility standardization is a critical element for ensuring installations meet Army expectations in the form of capabilities, capacities and process.

"Basically, we are improving the processes required to build the Army's new fire fighting facilities as quickly and effectively as possible," Andrews said.

According to Andrews, now that the standard exists, every installation with a requirement to build new fire fighting facilities has most of the work done for them. However, he said since there are different mission needs for different installations, Huntsville Center will work with the installations to meet those



Graphic by Benny Pitsinger

This Building Information Model (BIM) illustrates the newest approved Army standard for fire stations.

needs.

As the designated facility standards technical lead for Army fire stations, Huntsville Center architect Juan Pace has worked closely with the ACSIM staff, the Army Installation Management Command and the Army fire fighting community in a two-year effort to develop an Army standard for fire stations that meets the user's and proponent's functional needs, life-cycle cost goals and energy conservation requirements.

"Since fire fighting on installations is focused on different mission aspects, we have to take into account each station's concentration," Pace said.

"Some installation fire stations specialize in structural and brush fires while other fire stations focus on aircraft fires on flight lines. Other stations can fight all types of fires, so it's our job to give them the right design for their needs and ensure the facilities meet various national standards and criteria," Pace said.

Safety Corner

May is National Stroke Awareness Month: knowing symptoms can save lives

By Wanda Griffin
Safety Office

May is National Stroke Awareness Month. The aim of National Stroke Awareness Month is to make Americans aware that they may be able to save the life of a person experiencing a stroke.

Stroke is the third leading cause of death in the U.S. It is also a leading cause of serious long-term disability. While most strokes occur in people aged 65 years and older, strokes can occur at any age. But, the chances of having a stroke increase if a person has certain risk factors, or criteria that can cause a stroke. The good news is that up to 80 percent of strokes can be prevented, and the best way to protect yourself and loved ones from stroke is to understand personal risk and how to manage it.

• Stroke Risk Factors:

- There are controllable medical risk factors such as high blood pressure, atrial fibrillation, high cholesterol and diabetes.
- Controllable lifestyle risk factors include tobacco use and smoking, alcohol use, physical inactivity and obesity.
- Uncontrollable risk factors include age, gender, race, family history, previous stroke or Transient Ischemic Attack (TIA), Fibromuscular Dysplasia and Patent Foramen Ovale (PFO or Hole in the Heart).
- You may view the Stroke Risk Scorecard at www.stroke.org/site/



If you think someone may be having a stroke, act F.A.S.T. and do the simple test.

[DocServer/scorecard_risk.pdf?docID=601.](#)

• Stroke Symptoms:

SUDDEN numbness or weakness of face, arm or leg — especially on one side of the body.

SUDDEN confusion, trouble speaking or understanding.

SUDDEN trouble seeing in one or both eyes.

SUDDEN trouble walking, dizziness, loss of balance or coordination.

SUDDEN severe headache with no known cause.

Call 911 immediately if you have any of these symptoms.

• Stroke Prevention Guidelines:

- Know your blood pressure.
- Find out if you have atrial fibrillation.
- If you smoke, stop.
 - If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation.
 - Find out if you have high cholesterol.
 - If you are diabetic...
 - Exercise.

- Enjoy a lower sodium (salt), lower fat diet.

- Circulation (movement of the blood through the heart and blood vessels) problems.

- Know the Symptoms of Stroke.

National Stroke Awareness Month is also a timely reminder to stroke survivors and how organizations such as the National Stroke Association supports stroke survivors through their lifelong journey of recovery.

The National Stroke Awareness Month program places emphasis on making the public aware about acting F.A.S.T.

According to the National Stroke Association, a person experiencing a stroke can be treated if people have acted F.A.S.T. — 80 percent of strokes can also be prevented. F.A.S.T. is an acronym for things to check in a suspected stroke victim:

If you think someone may be having a stroke, act F.A.S.T. and do the simple test.

(This information is from Web sites sponsored by the National Stroke Association.)



Photo by Becky Proaps

Jo Anita Miley explains the environmental activity to a group of children visiting the Huntsville Center station on Redstone Arsenal, Ala., during the mock environmental site investigation held on Earth Day.

Earth Day is learning day for area children

By James Campbell
Public Affairs Office

Environmental specialists arrived at the site of a suspected chemical spill April 22. Upon arrival, they donned protective gear and moved out smartly. The “experts” swiftly located and tested the suspicious substance and waited with bated breath for the heart-sinking feeling that can only come from a positive result.

Except these events were not real and the environmental specialists were area school children taking part in Earth Day activities in an area of Redstone Arsenal, Ala., called “The Path to Nature.”

More than 180 students from local communities visited the site to experience learning events organized by Redstone Arsenal’s Environmental Management Division and provided by several organizations in the area, including the U.S. Army Engineering and Support Center, Huntsville.

Huntsville Center staff managed a mock environmental site investigation, giving the children a chance to don protective suits and search for a chemical called “methyl ethyl sue goo.” After discovering the chemical spill, simulated by baking soda buried in small holes around the area, the students checked the mysterious substance by adding a “test solution” containing vinegar.

Once the chemical reacted with the test solution, volunteers leading the

children through the exercise doused them with “silly string” to indicate they were contaminated. The students quickly left the contaminated zone for a mock decontamination procedure before moving to a clean area to remove their protective suits.

The exercise was prefaced by a brief explanation of how engineers and technicians from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers are sometimes called upon to identify and remove harmful agents from the environment.

Other events for the students included a bean planting ceremony, a demonstration of flint knapping, experimental archeology and a wetlands walk. The children also visited with wildlife rehabilitators who allowed

the children to see baby animals while explaining various conservation efforts.



Photo by Becky Proaps

James Campbell, right, “contaminates” children with silly string during the mock environmental site investigation held on Earth Day, April 22.



Photo by Becky Proaps

Bruce Railey, left, one of several volunteers from Huntsville Center, helps children from local schools get into their protective suits during the mock environmental site investigation.



Photo by Becky Proaps

Lauren Clark, left, Lequita Byrd-Craig, Brandy Wilkerson and Kenyata Johnson assist the children with their protective suits during the Earth Day activities on Redstone Arsenal.

Performance management: last piece to GS transition

By Stephanie Tucker
Business Management Office

The Performance Management piece is the last, but not least, part of the National Security Personnel System to General Schedule Transition. When available, guidance from the Department of Defense, Department of the Army and Headquarters, USACE, will be published and released. Nevertheless, effective performance management is the cornerstone of Huntsville Center going from good to great. The Total Army Performance Evaluation System is an established systematic process of ensuring the duties and responsibilities performed by an employee(s) are aligned with the organization's mission and goals. The role of the supervisor is an indispensable part of this process. Army Transition Guidance outlines the transferring of NSPS objectives to TAPES performance standards for the special rating cycle Oct. 1, 2009 through Oct. 31 2010.*

Performance management timeline for Huntsville Center Transition May 23

1. Complete NSPS interim — All pay bands prior to transition no later than April 30

All NSPS interim performance reviews must be completed; documented in the Performance Appraisal Application; approved/reviewed by Higher Level Review; and communicated to employees. If you do not have access to PAA, use a hard copy of DD Form 2906.

2. TAPES performance plan in place — All GS grades no later than June 22

NSPS job objectives must be transferred to a TAPES performance plan and approved by senior rater/rater, and communicated to employees. *Raters should communicate in writing to employees as early as practicable that NSPS job objectives will transform to TAPES and there is NO break in accountability.*

3. Rating cycle for 2010 (including NSPS and TAPES) — All GS Grades Oct. 1, 2009, through Oct. 31, 2010*

*This special cycle is to accommodate the NSPS to TAPES transition. For the *subsequent TAPES rating period, the normal end of rating cycle dates will apply.*

4. Complete TAPES rating of record — All GS grades no later than Dec. 15.

Rating assessments should include the periods under NSPS and TAPES (Oct. 1, 2009 – Oct. 31, 2010) as employees are under the same job objectives. Annual appraisals are due in the Civilian Personnel Office as soon as practical after the end of the rating period but at least within 45 days, IAW AR 6090-400, www.apd.army.mil.

All TAPES provisions will apply, e.g., performance awards, quality step increases (QSI), and the timeline for forwarding appraisals to South Central Civilian Personnel Office for processing (Huntsville Center's Command Group is currently reviewing this process for subsequent rating cycles).

(References: *Army Transition Guidance for Termination of NSPS, Version 2, dtd 12-APR-2010, Appendix F*)

Vucinaj

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The contracting officer is responsible for preparing DD Form 2579 and coordinating her/or his decisions or recommendations on a particular acquisition with the Office of Small Business Programs. Vucinaj streamlined the three-day process down to four hours, and contract specialists and contracting officers are able to sign and submit the form

to the SBO electronically.

Tonju Butler, Pre-award Team B branch chief and also Vucinaj's former supervisor said Vucinaj's move to the new position has helped to build on the positive relationship between Center Contracting and the SBO that Vucinaj began while on the temporary assignment to the SBO.

"Rebecca has a zest for improving processes to help the customer," Butler said.

"She streamlined the tracking process for 2579's, and made the entire process easier for Center Contracting teams because we couldn't go forward with a contract unless the paper form was date-stamped and signed by the contract specialist, contracting officer and the small business specialist. We can work faster."

Vucinaj said partnering is her first priority. She welcomes the opportunity to foster good working

relationships between businesses and Huntsville Center teams. Her background in Center Contracting and experience within other organizations has prepared her for the job.

"This is an exciting opportunity for me," Vucinaj said. "The puzzle (match-making) can look challenging; it's my job to find the right fit for businesses with our organization."

Goal 3

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actions under **Objective 3c**: Deliver reliable infrastructure using a risk-informed asset management strategy; however, you may be contributing to this objective.

Looking at the supporting information in the Campaign Plan, this objective involves investment decisions using risk-based methodologies so that critical facilities obtain priority in funding decisions, Suever said.

Questions you might consider relative to this objective:

- How do I prioritize projects?
- How does risk factor into my project delivery decisions?

- How do I address risk with my customers?

The final objective under Goal 3 is **Objective 3d**: Develop and apply innovative approaches to delivering quality infrastructure.

Huntsville Center's action related to this objective is to develop a system that allows for the visualization and analysis of the infrastructure associated with Huntsville Center programs and projects.

"Using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) as an enabling technology, Huntsville Center is developing a methodology for understanding what we are doing at installations, how the projects relate to each other and identifying potential areas where we

might provide better service," Suever said. "This action will help see infrastructure support as an installation-wide versus a project-centric solution."

You could ask yourself:

- How do I minimize risk to our customers?
- How do I share knowledge and information with customers and co-workers?
- How do I implement lessons learned?
- What do I do to bring other programs to the attention of my customer?

Maybe you are an engineer or architect designing a facility that comes under a Center of Standardization; maybe you are a contracting officer or contracting officer

representative; or maybe you are a program or project manager providing over site on a project using the new facility standards.

If you support installations, you should be able to see a link with any or all of the objectives under Goal 3, Suever said.

Remember, links to both the USACE Campaign Plan and Huntsville Center's IPLAN can be found on the Huntsville Center Intranet. Look at both those documents for more information.

Next month, the last article in the series will discuss Goal 4, which focuses on technical competence, strategic communication, standardized business processes and work force recruitment, retention and training.

Pueblo

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agent. The inside of the weapon is remotely accessed and mustard agent is washed out with high-pressure water.

- **Neutralization of the mustard**

agent. The mustard agent is mixed with hot water. The resulting mixture is neutralized with a caustic solution. The byproduct is called hydrolysate.

- **Biotreatment.** The hydrolysate is treated with microbes that break down the solution into water and biosludge. The water is recovered for reuse in the process and the biosludge is secured in containers for disposal at an off-site permitted facility.

- **Disposing of the metal parts.** Metal parts are heated to 1,000 degrees Fahrenheit for 15 minutes

and can then be recycled.

At the end of the three-year destruction phase, the buildings where the chemical munitions were processed will be torn down and the area remediated.

Safety of the work force and the safety of the community is emphasized throughout the facility construction and weapons destruction process.

Throughout the construction of the facility, the contractor has logged more than 3 million safe man-hours without a lost time incident, and was recognized by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration last year with the Voluntary Protection Program Star Status.

This history of safe construction is no accident. Huntsville Center's safety specialists assist the resident office by conducting quarterly inspections of the site. Victor Taylor, chief of Huntsville's

Safety Office, and Charles Rollins, an occupational health and safety specialist, inspected the site March 23.

"The Bechtel engineering and construction team at PCAPP continues to maintain an outstanding safety and environmental compliance program through their diligence and management's participation at all levels," Rollins said. "In addition, from day one Bechtel has promoted a team effort approach ensuring total employee commitment to safety at all levels."

Huntsville Center designed and managed the construction of seven other facilities for the destruction of chemical weapons. Currently, the operations at three facilities are complete. The facility on Johnston Atoll has been torn down and the area remediated.

Scale Back Alabama gets results

Losing, losing, losing: Employees do it again

**By Becky Proaps
Public Affairs Office**

For the third year in a row Huntsville Center is losing, losing, losing—weight that is. Twenty-two teams with four people on each team worked and exercised losing 661 pounds for their efforts. Beginning in January the Center participated with hundreds of other organizations for 10 weeks in the statewide “Scale Back Alabama” weight-loss program.

The top team lost 74 pounds. The D2-Dedicated and Determined team, comprised of Karen Miedema (captain) Robert Miedema, Carol Zurowski and Yvette Rice beat the second place team by 4 pounds. The Third Time’s the Charm team, comprised of Jennifer Lawrence (captain), Sharon O’Connell, Cindy Otwell and Darlene Stapler lost 70 pounds. The Determinators, with Dorothy Richards (captain), Marisa Richards, Laura Mabee and Teresa Whalen tied for third place with the Chunky Monkeys comprised of Elise Goggin (captain), Kelly Enriquez, Robert Selfridge and Debbie Edwards by each team losing 48 pounds.

Bryant Purdin is the top male loser by losing 30 pounds. Robert Miedema lost 24 pounds and Terry Patton tied with Dan Gaston for third place by each losing 16 pounds.

Elizabeth Adams, Marcus

Adams’ wife, is the top female loser by shedding 26 pounds, Carol Zurowski lost 21 pounds and Jennifer Lawrence tied with Cindy Otwell by each losing 20 pounds.

The goal of the contest was to get each individual on a team to lose one pound per week for a total of 10 pounds during the contest. For every individual who completed the 10-week contest and lost at least 10 pounds, his/her name was placed in a drawing held April 28 for one of 20 statewide prizes of \$250 each. Thirty-five individuals at Huntsville Center lost 10 or more pounds and went into the \$250 drawings from Scale Back Alabama.

For the team that maintained all of its original team members throughout the contest with each losing at least 10 pounds, the team name was placed in a drawing for one statewide, grand prize of \$1,000 per team member. The teams D2, Third Time’s the Charm and the Chunky Monkeys were eligible for this drawing.

Keeping the D2 team motivated turned out to truly be a group effort.

“I had intended to send tips or encouraging words every Monday to the team, however, Carol had the idea that everyone should tell the other team members how much they had lost every Monday,” Miedema said. “I think this was one of the keys to our success. Every



Photo by Becky Proaps

Robert Miedema, left, Karen Miedema, captain, Carol Zurowski and Yvette Rice, are members of the Team D2 - Dedicated and Determined, the top team loser during the Scale Back Alabama weight-loss contest.



Courtesy photo

Bryant Purdin, left, was the top individual loser in the male category and Elizabeth Adams, right, was the top individual loser in the female category. Purdin lost 30 pounds; Adams lost 26 pounds.



Courtesy photo

Monday I would send an e-mail with tips and encouraging words and ask everyone to report their weight-loss progress. If you know someone is counting on you to lose 10 pounds and you need to tell how much you lost or didn’t lose over the week AND weekend, you try just a little bit harder to stick with it. No one wanted to be the person who let the team down, so we all did great! Personally, it was all portion control, three small meals and two small snacks each day, some healthier choices, a little sacrifice, and building in a little reward (low calorie ice cream snacks as well as a splurge meal once in a while).”

Even the name of the team had a special meaning. “It started with my

husband and I longing to find two other people who were “dedicated and determined” to lose weight; it starts with commitment. We have been with teams in the past that fell short. Once Carol Zurowski and Yvette Rice joined us, I knew we had a shot,” Miedema said. “We came up with the team name that reflected all of our weight loss desires. It is just a great feeling to win anything, especially, when many of us have been trying since Scale Back Alabama started a few years ago. It is also great to finally have a shot at the team money. And of course, winning means each member of the team has improved their health in a substantial way, which is always a good thing.”

Ethics Corner

The Hatch Act: What can I do?

**By Chris Paden
Office of Counsel**

It's that time again. Midterm elections in November and the primaries are already in full swing. Perhaps more than most years, there seems to be something in the air that is enticing people to get involved.

As government employees, however, we have to be cautious with our political activity. In fact, there is a law that states that federal employees are prohibited from some political activities altogether. The law is the Hatch Act.

Passed in 1939, the Hatch Act restricts the political activity of executive branch employees of the federal government. All civilian employees in the executive branch of the federal government, except the president and the vice president, are covered by the provisions of the Hatch Act. The military has their own regulation that governs military members and places the same restriction on them as the Hatch Act on civilian employees.

The Hatch Act limits certain political activities of federal employees both on and off duty. Violations of the Hatch Act may result in disciplinary action, up to and including removal.

The term "political activity" means doing something in active support of or opposition to a political party, a candidate for partisan political office (e.g., president, senator, representative, state or local legislature or office), or a partisan political group (e.g., "Historians for Smith").

Examples of political activity that would violate the Hatch Act if done while on duty or using government property include circulating a candidate's nominating petition within your office; using the computer in your office after work to produce a brochure in support of a candidate's campaign; sending e-mail invitations to campaign events to friends within the agency; and using the Center's Internet connection to forward e-mail messages received from a partisan campaign or someone supporting a partisan candidate. Also prohibited would be wearing a campaign button at the

Center.

Permissible political activity under the Hatch Act would include voting for the candidates of your choice; expressing opinions about candidates and issues; assisting in voter registration drives. You can wear a campaign button on your private time. You may also be a volunteer in someone's campaign and distribute flyers for them as long as you do not do it on government time or present yourself as a government employee.

By no means are the lists above complete. The general rule of thumb is that you are prohibited while on duty or in uniform to represent yourself in a partisan way or be involved in political activities. While not in uniform, not on government time and not in your workplace, you may exercise your right to engage in the political process as much as any other private citizen.

Should you have any questions, please come by and see me or call me at 895-1103.

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